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# A Comparative Study of the Effects of a Token Economy Program on the Achievement, Behavior, and Attitude of Middle School Students

Jane Nixon White  
*University of North Florida*

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PROMOTING THE DEVELOPMENT OF  
POSITIVE ATTITUDES IN A  
CULTURALLY PLURALISTIC CLASSROOM

by

Susan Talbird Bradley

A project submitted to the Division of Curriculum and  
Instruction in partial fulfillment of the requirements  
for the degree of

Master of Education

UNIVERSITY OF NORTH FLORIDA

COLLEGE OF EDUCATION AND HUMAN SERVICES

May, 1993

CERTIFICATE OF APPROVAL

The project of Susan Talbird Bradley is approved:

(Date)

**Signature Deleted**

**Signature Deleted**

**Signature Deleted**

Committee Chairperson

5/7/93

5/7/93

5/12/93

Accepted for the Department:

**Signature Deleted**

Chairperson

5/12/93

Accepted for the College/School:

**Signature Deleted**

Dean/Director

5/13/93

Accepted for the University:

**Signature Deleted**

Dean of Graduate Studies

5/17/93

## DEDICATION

This project is dedicated with love to my husband, Joe Bradley, for his encouragement and support. Without his countless hours of cooking, cleaning, and diaper changing, attainment of this degree would not have been possible.

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## ABSTRACT

This project addressed the following question: How can teachers promote positive attitudes in a culturally pluralistic classroom? The review of related literature revealed a shortage of both research and practical applications regarding multicultural approaches in the classroom. Therefore, the purpose of this project was to develop a curriculum which incorporated appropriate learning activities and strategies designed to enhance positive attitudes toward cultural differences in the elementary classroom.

The project was developed for third graders and goals which promoted a multicultural perspective were outlined. An attitudinal survey was developed and administered as a pre test to establish entry level attitudes toward diversity. Activities designed to facilitate the goal of the project were implemented during a six-week period. The attitudinal survey was readministered as a post test to assess potential changes in students' attitudes.

The data gathered was analyzed using comparisons of pre and post test responses. Positive movement occurred regarding each statement on the survey and ranged from negligible to significant. It was therefore determined that the unit of instruction fostered the development of more positive attitudes in a culturally pluralistic classroom. Other conclusions and recommendations were also included.

## CHAPTER ONE

### INTRODUCTION

Ours is a nation which is becoming more culturally, ethnically, and linguistically diverse. Demographers report that by 2020, one in every three people will be what is now termed a minority (Sobol, 1990). The percentage of culturally diverse students in Florida's school population has risen from thirty-two percent in 1980 to thirty-eight percent in 1990 (Florida Department of Education, 1991). Educators must find ways to promote the attitudes and skills which will enable our students to interact effectively in a changing world.

According to Banks (1992), problems related to diversity will intensify rather than diminish as the ethnic texture of the nation deepens. Educators must make efforts to change the problems related to racial and ethnic diversity into opportunities and strengths. If schools are to achieve their goals of maximizing human potential, improving the quality of life for all students, and promoting the ideals of freedom, justice, and dignity for all, they must meet the challenge of helping students develop more positive attitudes toward different cultural, racial, and ethnic groups.

The elementary school years are a crucial period for addressing issues of prejudice and discrimination because they are a developmental phase, during which children's attitudes and beliefs about different groups are being shaped and defined (Katz, 1983). The experiences children have or do not have during this time can determine subsequent attitudes and feelings. Unless children are placed in situations which require them to rethink their beliefs about group differences, it is unlikely they will do so on their own. Schools can provide opportunities for children to learn to understand the effects of prejudice and that being different does not mean being inferior.

Research on strategies for reducing prejudice provides evidence that educators can lessen prejudicial attitudes held by children (Byrnes, 1988). Evidence also suggests that it is possible to decrease the probability that such attitudes will develop (Pate, 1988). If prejudice in children can be reduced, the result could be the evolution of a more equitable society.

Although the available literature advocates multicultural education, addresses issues, and recommends courses of action, there is a need for research on what happens when teachers use multicultural education in the classroom - what forms it takes and why, how students respond, and what barriers are encountered. Because most suggestions for instruction are short and superficial,



practical applications for teachers need to be made available.

This project addresses the following question: How can one further the development of positive attitudes in a culturally pluralistic classroom? The purpose is to design a curriculum which incorporates appropriate learning materials and strategies to enhance the development of positive attitudes toward cultural differences in the elementary classroom. An assumption guiding the development of this curriculum is the belief that student attitudes and behaviors toward those of differing racial, cultural, or ethnic backgrounds can be changed through the implementation of curricula designed to enhance the appreciation of cultural diversity. The researcher also assumes that a multicultural approach which is infused into all aspects of the elementary curriculum is preferable to "add-on" programs (Pine & Hilliard, 1990) and that change in students' attitudes requires not only different materials but also different teaching strategies. Therefore, a variety of activities and strategies for enhancing the development of positive attitudes in a culturally pluralistic elementary classroom is presented.

The curriculum presented in this project is designed to meet the needs of third grade students in Fernandina Beach, Florida. Although this type of curriculum should ideally be implemented throughout the year, the duration of this

project is one six week period. A pre and post test attitudinal survey is used to assess the effectiveness of this curriculum, draw conclusions, and offer recommendations.

## DEFINITION OF TERMS

Multicultural Education - the study of culture as a process and product of human existence, whose end result is understanding and appreciating cultural diversity. Its goals include the development within students of a sense of esteem for cultures, knowledge of historical perspectives and differences in world perspective as shaped by culture, and the ability to successfully interact with individuals and groups from different cultural backgrounds (Heard, 1990).

Prejudice - unjustifiable negative feelings and beliefs about a racial or ethnic group or its members, characterized by preconceived opinions, judgements, or feelings that lack any foundation or substance (Pine & Hilliard, 1990).

Discrimination - unjustifiable negative behavior toward a racial or ethnic group or its members, expressed through distinction and decisions made through prejudice (Pine & Hilliard, 1990).

Racism - the combination of individual prejudice and individual discrimination with institutional policies and practices which result in unjustified negative treatment and subordination of members of a racial or ethnic group (Pine & Hilliard, 1990).

## CHAPTER TWO

### REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE

Although America is a multicultural society, it is not yet a pluralistic one where all racial and cultural groups have equal access to quality lives. Race is one of the most volatile issues in American life and schools are required to deal with its manifestations and implications every day. For Americans to embrace diversity, an understanding of the nature of racism and its relation to prejudice and discrimination must be developed.

Prejudice consists of unjustifiable negative feelings and beliefs about a racial or ethnic group or its members. It is characterized by preconceived opinions, judgements, or feelings that lack any foundation or substance.

Discrimination consists of unjustifiable negative behavior toward a racial or ethnic group and its members. It expresses itself in distinctions and decisions made on the basis of prejudice. Racism describes the combination of individual prejudice and individual discrimination . . . . and institutional policies and practices, that result in the unjustified negative treatment and

subordination of members of a racial or ethnic group (Pine & Hilliard, 1990, pp. 594-595).

Solving these problems should be a moral imperative for educators.

Although individuals may not hold biased beliefs at a personal level, all people learn prejudices in childhood. Children are aware of differences among people and are cognizant of prevailing social attitudes towards these differences at an early age (Katz, 1983). Children learn prejudice by observing the behavior of others and by experiencing the effects of differing attitudes toward different groups in the community. In order to make sense of their world, children exhibit a natural tendency to evaluate and categorize people and situations, thus increasing the likelihood of accepting prejudicial attitudes as the truth (Ramsey, 1987). Children are particularly susceptible to acquiring biases about those who are different than themselves from respected adults and other children in their lives (Derman-Sparks & Higa, 1980). Although many children learn prejudices from subtle messages within the family, some parents make determined and deliberate efforts to instill prejudice in their children (Dennis, 1981). The media may also reinforce group stereotypes, and is, in some instances, children's only source of information about other groups (Byrnes, 1988).

One's sense of personal identity is largely determined

from one's membership in groups. Children quickly learn that certain valuable qualities are associated with some groups while the qualities of other groups are demeaned. The exclusion of certain groups may be a part of the membership group's set of social rules, and association with out-group individuals may become injurious to the child's own social standing. Failure to address the differential weight given to such human characteristics as skin color, religious affiliation, or gender ignores a reality children have not only observed but incorporated in their own social behaviors and attitudes. Consequently, the problems of prejudice, discrimination, and racism may remain unexamined and unchallenged by children (Byrnes, 1988).

Legislation to protect minorities has not ended racism in this country. Racism still permeates the hearts, minds, and behavior of many and continues to be transmitted to our children. The legal reforms of the 1960's and 1970's did afford us, however, the opportunity to initiate policies and practices which counteract racial fear and ignorance and to change institutional norms which are impediments to cooperation between the races (Molnar, 1989).

Much of the multicultural literature fails to address the fact that the multicultural education movement emerged from Western democratic ideals (Banks, 1992). (A major goal of multicultural education is to close the gap between the democratic ideals of justice and equality and the practices

of society which contradict these ideals. A society founded on the concepts of liberty and justice cannot deny justice to some without repudiating its ideals. Education which adheres to the basic tenets of democratic society such as freedom, equality, and individual rights should teach children to understand both their own rights and those of others and to prize the well-being and dignity of all. If one values the ideals of democracy, one must instill these beliefs in children by working against prejudice and discrimination in today's society (Byrnes, 1988).

Instead of being divisive, as some critics contend, the goals of multicultural education are to reduce race, class, and gender divisions in the United States and the world. The real threats to national unity are the deepening racial and social class schisms in our society. According to Hilliard (1992), although the number of scholars who believe in the exclusive political and cultural correctness of the Western culture has increased, it is not necessary to choose between uniqueness and commonality when building a core curriculum. In a democratic society, all cultural groups must be represented.

The United States is becoming more culturally, ethnically, and linguistically diverse. According to the 1990 Census, one of every four Americans is a person of colour. Demographers say that by the year 2020, one of every three people will be what is now termed a minority.

More than 600,000 people a year, according to the U.S. Immigration and Naturalization Service, immigrate to this country (Sobol, 1990). By 2020, nearly half of the nation's students will be of colour. This increasing number of people of color will demand a greater role in curriculum decision making and in shaping curriculum which validates their experiences and histories. Americans must meet the challenge of transforming problems related to racial and ethnic diversity into opportunities and strengths, for as the ethnic make-up of the nation enlarges, problems related to diversity increase rather than diminish.

All children, even those in all white classrooms, are living in a society which is increasingly diverse. They continue to be exposed to the biases which are still evident in our country (Derman-Sparks, 1992). Students who are born and socialized within a mainstream culture have little opportunity to become free of monocultural assumptions and perspectives because schools reinforce the values, assumptions, and beliefs they learn at home and in their communities. These mainstream Americans are often unable to function effectively within other American cultures and may lack the motivation and ability to experience and benefit from cross-cultural relationships. Yet all students need the skills to understand others and function in a rapidly changing, diverse world (Banks, 1992). Curriculum which does nothing to counteract biases which dominant-culture



children encounter in their daily lives does little to help these children live effectively and fairly with diversity (Derman-Sparks, 1990).

Many argue that the academic failure of minority children is not due to some deprivation in their home or dysfunction in their families but rather to the conflicting expectations of school and home and to the school's devaluation of minority group cultures, not to any inherent failing in the culture of racial minorities (Gay, 1983). The challenge is not to repair deficient children but to change the atmosphere and operations in schools to meet the needs of these children. If schools are to achieve their goals of maximizing human potential, improving the quality of life for students, and promoting the ideals of freedom, justice, and dignity, they must acknowledge their obligation to incorporate ethnic pluralism and to accommodate the significance and persistence of ethnic qualities in individuals' lives.

The mission of public education is to ensure that all students are provided quality education which will allow them to function successfully in an interdependent, multiethnic, multicultural, and changing world (Pine & Hilliard, 1990). Banks (1989) further outlines the goals of multicultural education as the following:

1. to transform the school so that male and female students, exceptional students, as well as

students from diverse cultural, social, racial, and ethnic groups will experience an equal opportunity to learn in school,

2. to help all students develop more positive attitudes toward different cultural, racial, ethnic, and religious groups,
3. to empower students from victimized groups by teaching them decision-making and social skills, and
4. to help students develop cross-cultural dependency and view themselves from the perspectives of different groups. (p. 43)

He also states that "to create and maintain a civic community that works for the common good, education in a democratic society should help students acquire the knowledge, attitudes, and skills they will need to participate in civic action to make society more equitable and just." (Banks, 1992, p. 32).

Schools can play an important role in the struggle against racism. The elementary school years are a vital period for addressing issues of prejudice and discrimination. According to Katz (1983), these years are a developmental period during which children's attitudes and beliefs about different social groups are being elaborated upon and defined. Experiences these children have or do not have can determine later attitudes and feelings. It is

unlikely that children will rethink their beliefs about group differences unless they are placed in situations where they are required to do so. Schools can address the interpersonal aspects of racism and offer activities which teach about the effects of oppression on minority group members and their cultures. The strengths and contributions of minority group members and their cultures can be acknowledged in the school setting, thus helping children understand the effects of racism and learn that being different does not mean being inferior (Molnar, 1989).

Unfortunately, many teachers do not directly address prejudice and discrimination in the classroom (Byrnes, 1988). Though they may take a multicultural approach in some areas, discussion of prejudice and discrimination is not necessarily included. The research literature on effective strategies for reducing prejudice provides evidence that educators can lessen prejudicial attitudes held by children, however. In fact, teachers may be able to decrease the likelihood that such attitudes will develop (Pate, 1988). If prejudice can be reduced among children, it is vital that educators consider effective strategies.

The problems of racism and educational equity may be addressed by educators by "confronting and challenging racism, increasing the pool of minority teachers, developing and implementing a multicultural curriculum, improving pedagogical practices, elevating the self-esteem of all

children, and teaching character development." (Hilliard & Pine, 1990, p. 596) Most teachers have a good understanding of a foundation for educational equity: They must care about children and teach them to care about each other, showing that hatred hurts. Facilitating children's abilities to think critically and offering them the means to implement change will open up new worlds for them to discover. Teachers must also establish a caring environment in the classroom (Bullard, 1992).

Even six week sessions utilizing multi-ethnic curricula have been found to produce positive racial attitudes in five to six year old students (Carter, Dentine-Carter, & Benson, 1980). Pate (1988), however, recommends a multicultural approach which is infused into the K-12 curriculum in all subject areas and supported by high quality instructional materials, as opposed to "add-on" programs. Jones and Derman-Sparks (1992) agree, and add that, as teachers make efforts to teach children about each other's cultures so that students can learn to respect each other, they must beware of developing a "tourist approach" to diversity in which activities about diversity are only occasionally added to the curriculum, rather than integrated on a daily basis. This latter approach emphasizes the exotic differences between cultures and ignores common, real-life problems and experiences of different peoples. Such limited exposure misrepresents cultural realities and perpetuates

stereotyping.

Byrnes's (1988) categorization of strategies for effective prejudice-reduction appear to accommodate the majority of techniques represented in the review of the literature. The first category includes methods which increase social contact between groups. She cites Miller and Brewer (1984), who contend that children who have positive goal-oriented interactions with equal status individuals in supportive environments show improved attitudes toward that group. The second category includes activities which promote self-esteem or mental health. Strategies which increase cognitive sophistication comprise the third category and activities designed to increase empathy and understanding for other groups the fourth. Strategies in each of these categories are to be examined in the section which follows.

Activities which promote positive interaction between different racial or ethnic groups are useful. A critical factor in influencing racial preference or bias is the amount of positive contact with other-race members (Carter, Dentine-Carter, & Benson, 1980). An imaging study used to assess students' attitudes and expectations found that many black students felt that whites had a negative perception of them in social and academic areas. This was confirmed when pretest data from white students reported negative expectations. Posttesting conducted after a program which

paired blacks and whites for purposes of academic pursuits indicated that many students found that most of the faults they had expected did not exist (Foster, 1989).

Researchers have found that students in cooperative learning environments exhibit more positive race relations. Other positive learning outcomes include greater self-esteem, more positive attitudes toward school, higher levels of reasoning, more on-task behavior, greater concern for others, and greater achievement than in other learning environments (Conard, 1988). Johnson and Johnson (1985) agree that cooperative learning experiences generate increased acceptance of differences and interpersonal attraction between students from different ethnic backgrounds. Establishing cooperative contact among students who might not ordinarily seek such interactions moves students beyond initial prejudices to multidimensional views of one another. Such experiences encourage them to interact with one another as fellow students rather than as stereotypes. Therefore, when educators encourage students to help each other learn and to value helping and cooperating, prejudice can be reduced as students gain mutual respect in achieving common goals.

Many agree that a close correlation between prejudice and self-esteem exists. Children who have low levels of prejudice have higher levels of self-esteem and have more frequent positive experiences with members of other cultures

than do those who are highly prejudiced. Other outcomes appear to include greater cognitive sophistication, more sensitivity, and increased openness to other points of view (Pettigrew, 1981). Pate (1988) asserts that if one were limited to affecting one aspect of students, the greatest benefits would come from improving self-esteem. Children have higher self-esteem in school environments which foster security, acceptance, and responsibility and where warmth, praise, and appropriate limits are consistently present. Evidence suggests that such environments will impede the development of prejudicial attitudes in children (Byrnes, 1988).

Asante (1992) outlines several strategies which result in improved self-esteem. He suggests that teachers "center" children within the context of familiar cultural and social references from their own historical settings. When information is presented in such a way that students feel they are a part of that information, they become empowered and gain self-respect. Students who are centered within cultural information which is meaningful to them are better, more disciplined students with a greater motivation toward schoolwork. Wiggington (1992) supports a similar philosophy in his work with Foxfire.

Schools have contributed to the dislocation of African-American children and others by encouraging them to address acquisition of information about the majority culture only.

Such curricula reinforce limited feelings of self-worth and cultural dislocation by ignoring the historical contributions of African-Americans and other cultures. Instead, the role of the teacher should be to achieve congruence between the realities of students' cultural backgrounds and the classroom (Asante, 1992).

Other strategies found in the literature which address prejudice reduction also stress critical thinking. Much of one's thinking comes from one's subconscious and is automatic. It is based on habit and conditioning. People tend to accept without question that which is compatible with their beliefs and to reject without question that which conflicts with those beliefs. The danger in this kind of thinking is that it makes one susceptible to emotional appeals, as opposed to rational ones. One may become suspicious, fearful, or hostile to anyone or anything different, thus engendering prejudice (Walsh, 1988). The more one knows about other groups, the less likely one is to hold negative attitudes toward those groups. Critical thinking processes help students avoid prejudicial views. Research studies confirm these assumptions (Pate, 1988).

To teach students antiprejudicial thinking, school experiences should be infused with critical thinking about knowledge and life. The opposite of prejudicial thinking is evaluating with full examination and forming opinions with just grounds and sufficient knowledge. Evidence suggests



that students' prejudices can be reduced by giving them a different conceptual lens through which to view the world (Walsh, 1988). Establishing a world view grounded in reasoned judgement, where one's beliefs and actions are guided by thoughtful examination of evidence, is the rationale for teaching critical thinking.

According to Walsh (1988), there are several strategies useful in teaching, reinforcing, and rewarding critical thinking in the classroom. Developing a climate of trust and respect and establishing rules which demand respect for the ideas and opinions of others is important. Creating an environment where asking the right questions is as important as giving the right answers and where there is a balance between questions which have one correct answer and those which may have more than one possible response is another useful strategy. Teachers should find a balance between teacher talk and student talk which enables students to deepen their understanding and knowledge. By providing a success-oriented environment, teachers will foster increased self-esteem, which aids the development of confidence in one's reasoning and consequently, the reduction of one's level of prejudice. Promoting objectivity and respect for other viewpoints as well as open-mindedness and flexibility is also a useful method for encouraging critical thinking.

Cognitive training should enable students to think on a higher, more complex level. It should help students acquire

the mental skills to avoid thinking in simplistic terms and overgeneralizations, the basis of all stereotypes. Learning to perceive members of other groups as different from each other allows students to avoid the tendency to overgeneralize and stereotype, usually in a negative way, and thus diminishes negative attitudes toward members of the group (Pate, 1988). Gardiner (1972) found that students trained to differentiate between relevant and irrelevant characteristics of people displayed lower levels of prejudice after training.

Research indicates that activities designed to increase empathy and understanding for members of other groups are most effective when they include a strong affective component which elicits students' understanding of and respect for the feelings of others (Byrnes, 1988). Studies at the fifth grade and high school levels show that prejudice levels can be reduced through empathetic role playing or other vicarious experiences (Gimmestad & DeChiara, 1982). Materials which engage students emotionally in the lives of particular people or characters affect those students positively. Lichter's and Johnson's (1969) study of second graders incorporated reading materials selected for their multiethnic focus. The books depicted characters from different ethnic groups as decent, hardworking people. The books for a comparison group were identical except that the characters were all white, Anglo

Saxons. Students who read the multiethnic books developed more positive attitudes toward other ethnic groups than did the comparison group.

Films designed to reduce prejudice may also be useful. Research indicates that films which have a plot, are realistic, and portray believable characters are more effective than are message films (Pate, 1988). When students are drawn into the human emotions, fears, dreams, and problems of others, they are better able to understand the effects of prejudice.

There are teacher behaviors which contribute to the reduction of prejudice in the classroom. Educators must value differences, viewing them as resources for learning. Until this occurs, neither white nor minority students will be exposed to the teaching and learning experiences which will prepare them to interact effectively in an increasingly diverse world (Pine & Hilliard, 1990). Teachers should know that children bring their culture as well as their individuality into the classroom. Therefore, teachers should study the cultures of the children they teach (Heard, 1990). Teachers should confront racist behavior, whether intentional or unintentional. They should pinpoint the behavior, label it as racist, and explain why it will not be tolerated, for teachers are models whose lead children will often follow (Pollard, 1989).

The academic expectations a teacher holds for students

can also influence the atmosphere of the classroom. A teacher may express lower expectations for minority students by giving simpler academic tasks, allowing them to do less academic work, focusing more time on social behavior of minorities as opposed to academic behavior of whites, and attributing academic performance of white students to effort and factors within their control while attributing poor performance of minorities to factors outside their control (Pollard, 1989). Teachers should convey the message that learning is valued for all students and that all students have the potential to be successful.

The review of the literature revealed some disagreements and needs for further study. Not all educators agree about what groups should be included in multicultural education or what the goals should be. Most of the literature stresses advocacy, addresses issues, and recommends courses of action. Most suggestions for instruction are short and superficial and there is little linkage of practical application with theoretical foundations. Although some authors draw on related areas of research, there needs to be research on what happens when teachers work with multicultural education in the classroom - what form it takes and why, how students respond, and what barriers are encountered.

Efforts need to be made to demonstrate how multicultural education can improve the overall quality of

general education. Practitioners must show how multicultural education can be infused into all other aspects of education without compromising either dimension. Empirical evidence of the effectiveness of multicultural education must be provided.

## CHAPTER THREE

### METHODS AND PROCEDURES

The review of related literature revealed a scarcity of research on what happens when teachers use a multicultural approach in the classroom. Practical suggestions for instruction were also limited. This project was designed to address these needs.

In order to develop curriculum which furthers the development of positive attitudes in a culturally pluralistic classroom, goals which promote a multicultural perspective must be developed. This project incorporated the following goals for students: a) to recognize the basic similarities among members of the human race and the uniqueness of individuals, b) to recognize and accept that America has been enriched by the contributions of all its groups, c) to recognize and accept the positive aspects of cultural differences, d) to recognize the inequity of prejudice and that it can be a block to communication and interaction, and e) to accept others on the basis of individual worth.

The next step of this curriculum design involved choosing and developing activities and strategies to meet these goals. The activities selected fall within a

continuum of multicultural perspectives. Some aspects address the development of children's fundamental social skills. The development of strong self-concepts, positive cultural identity, and acceptance of differing points of view constitute the focus of this level. The aim of some activities is enlarging children's cultural knowledge base by providing information and promoting understanding of other races, cultures, and ethnic groups. Other objectives include integrating multicultural materials and designing a multicultural classroom environment. To that end, multicultural strategies and activities are infused into the total curriculum and engage both the affective and cognitive domains.

This curriculum development project was designed for a group of third graders in Fernandina Beach, Florida. Of the twenty-seven students, twenty-one were white and six were black. There were fourteen boys and thirteen girls. Although ideally multicultural education is implemented throughout the school year, the duration of this project allowed only for a six week pilot test.

In order to determine students' level of positive attitudes toward diversity, a fifteen question attitudinal survey was developed. A copy of this instrument can be found on pages 34-35. According to Wick (1973), if it is important that each student at least indicate the direction of his or her attitude toward each item, the middle response

position should be eliminated. Therefore, a four point Likert scale was employed to ensure that each student indicated some direction of commitment. Items were designed so that positive responses were clearly in one of the two directions on the scale. Also, about half of the statements were phrased in a positive sense and the remaining statements in a negative sense. The survey was administered as a pretest. After an implementation of a six week unit of instruction, the attitudinal survey was readministered to assess potential changes in students' level of positive attitudes toward cultural differences.

The data gathered was analyzed using comparisons of pre and post test responses to determine the effectiveness of the curricular unit of instruction. A mean score for each question was also determined. A summary of these findings, conclusions, and recommendations can be found in Chapter Five.



CHAPTER FOUR  
CURRICULUM GUIDE

Promoting the Development of Positive Attitudes in a  
Culturally Pluralistic Classroom

Goal:

To further the development of positive attitudes in a culturally pluralistic classroom.

Rationale:

Ours is a culturally pluralistic society. If schools are to help transform problems related to diversity into opportunities and strengths, they must endeavor to assist students in the development of more positive attitudes toward diversity.

Objective I: Students will recognize the basic similarities among members of the human race and the uniqueness of individuals.

Objective II: Students will recognize and accept that America has been enriched by the contributions of all its groups.

Objective III: Students will recognize and accept the positive aspects of cultural differences.

Objective IV: Students will recognize the inequity of prejudice and that it can be a block to communication and interaction.

Objective V: Students will accept others on the basis of individual worth.

Procedure:

This guide uses a series of activities implemented over a six-week period. These exercises are designed to promote the achievement of the stated objectives. Specific steps for implementing these activities can be found on pages 36 to 57.

Evaluation:

In order to assess changes in students' attitudes toward diversity, a pre-test/post-test attitudinal survey is administered prior to and after the implementation of the curricular activities. Pre and post test scores are compared to evaluate the effectiveness of the program.

# SURVEY

Circle 1 . . . if you STRONGLY DISAGREE  
 Circle 2 . . . if you DISAGREE  
 Circle 3 . . . if you AGREE  
 Circle 4 . . . if you STRONGLY AGREE

	SD	D	A	SA
1. All people are alike in some ways.	1	2	3	4
2. The world would be a better place if all people were just alike	1	2	3	4
3. We are all different in some ways.	1	2	3	4
4. I can tell by looking at someone if they could be a friend of mine.	1	2	3	4
5. It doesn't matter to me if a person is black or white, boy or girl, rich or poor, as long as they are a good friend.	1	2	3	4
6. It is important that my friends look, think, and act a lot like me.	1	2	3	4
7. All of the people who have made America a great country have been white.	1	2	3	4
8. America is a better country because of the contributions of people from lots of different backgrounds.	1	2	3	4
9. African Americans, Hispanic Americans, Asian Americans, and others have added a lot of good things to the world.	1	2	3	4
10. It is good that we are all different in some ways.	1	2	3	4
11. Different ideas from different kinds of people can help solve lots of problems.	1	2	3	4
12. People who are different from me help make the world a better place to live.	1	2	3	4

- |     |   |   |   |   |   |
|-----|---|---|---|---|---|
| 13. | I decide if a person is good or bad based on how different from or alike me they are.                         | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 |
| 14. | It is hard to talk to people who are different from me.   | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 |
| 15. | A good way to judge people is by what they look like, how they talk, or by the different ideas they may have. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 |

## ACTIVITY ONE

This exercise should be used in conjunction with the following activities to provide students an avenue to explore new experiences.

### Procedure:

1. Each time the class explores relationships, group processes, acceptance of differences, or anything demonstrating the need for understanding of each persons' uniqueness, allow follow-up time for making journal entries.
2. Suggest questions to facilitate the writing process. How did they feel during the experience? How did they respond to others during and after the experience? Why? How and why did others respond to them? What did they learn? Can this knowledge be used in other situations?
3. Journal entries may be used to initiate other discussions and activities.
4. Allow sharing or confidentiality of journals as students wish.

## ACTIVITY TWO

This activity is designed to help children get to know one another and discover shared interests.

### Procedure:

1. Have students complete worksheet, "Guess Who" (see page 39), without putting their names.
2. Redistribute papers randomly, making sure no one has his or her own paper.
3. After students have read the answers, instruct them to move around the classroom asking questions until they find the person whose paper they have.
4. Students must join hands with the person they want to question.
5. Students may not simply ask if they have his or her paper. Students may ask three questions about the information in the paper they have. For example, they may ask, "Is your favorite animal a rabbit?"
6. If the answer to the question is no, the person must give his or her answer to the question.
7. After one person has asked three questions, the other may ask three questions to determine if the first questioner has his or her paper.
8. Students continue in this manner until all students have identified the owner of their paper.
9. Discuss with students what they learned about one

another. Discuss interests, talents, similarities and differences which crossed cultures, sexes, and backgrounds.

GUESS WHO?

1. My favorite place to be is \_\_\_\_\_.
2. The thing I do best is \_\_\_\_\_.
3. School is \_\_\_\_\_.
4. My favorite animal is \_\_\_\_\_.
5. The most interesting place I have been is \_\_\_\_\_.
6. I was born in \_\_\_\_\_.
7. In my spare time I like to \_\_\_\_\_.
8. My favorite food is \_\_\_\_\_.
9. I don't like it when \_\_\_\_\_.
10. My favorite T.V. show is \_\_\_\_\_.
11. I am scared of \_\_\_\_\_.
12. I am different from others because \_\_\_\_\_.
13. I like to play \_\_\_\_\_.
14. I don't like to eat \_\_\_\_\_.
15. When I grow up I \_\_\_\_\_.
16. I am happy when \_\_\_\_\_.
17. I am sad when \_\_\_\_\_.
18. If I had \$1,000 I would \_\_\_\_\_.
19. The best thing that ever happened to me was \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_.
20. The worst thing that ever happened to me was \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_.



### ACTIVITY THREE

This activity provides an opportunity for students to appreciate uniqueness, giving positive value to differences.

#### Procedure:

1. Photograph each child and mount pictures on a large piece of construction paper. Hang these around the room.
2. Explain to students that they are to write something true and good about each of their classmates on their picture paper throughout the week. They may or may not sign their names.
3. Emphasize that everyone has good qualities and that they are to try to discover as many of those good qualities in their classmates as possible.
4. Instruct students to choose someone they do not know as well to write about before writing about a friend.
5. The teacher should also add comments and encourage students to read the comments about their classmates.
6. At the end of the week, discuss the activity and feelings about it with the class. Did students begin to feel differently about classmates by concentrating on their good qualities? Were the good qualities they discovered in those they did

not know well surprising? Why had these qualities not been noticed before? Was it because of views we have about how certain people are "supposed" to be? Do students feel closer to each other now? Why? What other ways can we let others know about their good qualities?

7. Allow students to take their sheets home to keep and share.

#### ACTIVITY FOUR

This activity encourages students to look beyond appearance when making judgements.

Procedure:

1. Present students with a large, brightly gift-wrapped box and a small, ragged, dirty carton.
2. Tell them to consider carefully before they decide which one they want to open for a surprise.
3. Open whichever box they decide upon and then the other. The large, pretty box should contain trash. The small, dirty box a group snack.
4. Discuss the reasons appearance is not a good indicator of worth. Would appearance be a good way to decide whether or not to play with a new child in the class? Are there other situations where appearance is not a good predictor of value?

## ACTIVITY FIVE

This activity is designed to sensitize children to the pain of discrimination and to explore feelings, values, and attitudes related to freedom and intolerance.

### Procedure:

1. At the beginning of the day, choose non-physical characteristics to divide students into two groups. One group will have special privileges and the other group will have privileges denied. Characteristics could include color of clothing, stripes or prints, shoes which lace or do not, etc.
2. Explain what the two groups can or cannot do. Privileges include lining up first, using learning centers, first choice of P.E. equipment, eating with the teacher, using the electric pencil sharpeners, and helping to make decisions about the schedule for the day.
3. Have the group exchange roles the next day.
4. At the end of the day, have students identify the feelings, values, and attitudes they experienced. Relate these feelings to freedom and intolerance. Explore what happens if differences are not valued. Compare and contrast the feelings of both groups.

## ACTIVITY SIX

This activity is designed to help students identify overgeneralizations and faulty reasoning so as not to judge others unfairly.

### Procedure:

1. Construct generalizations such as the following:

Spinach tastes awful.

Spinach is green.

All green foods taste awful.

I saw Jim steal a candy bar.

Jim lives on Beech Street.

All people who live on Beech Street steal.

Mary cheated on her test.

Mary is in third grade.

All third graders cheat on tests.

Sam uses bad language.

Sam is poor.

All poor people use bad language.

2. Help children identify why these generalizations are invalid. Lead them to understand how such generalizations influence the way we act. For

example, we might be unwilling to get to know someone who lives on Beech Street because we think they might steal from us. Show that this overgeneralization has become a prejudice.

3. Discuss how prejudices are harmful to individuals, both victims and victimizers. Lead them to realize that those who prejudge and discriminate miss out on positive learning experiences and are not learning to think well because they limit the amount of information they are willing to consider in any given situation.

## ACTIVITY SEVEN

This activity is designed to help children recognize and explore stereotypical associations they may have regarding different colors.

### Procedure:

1. Lead students to discuss associations we have with colors. Ask, for example, "What do you think when you think of red?" Elicit responses and list on the board, (i.e. anger, fire, blood, burning).
2. Help children define their associations with the color.
3. Discuss the use of the word red in the English language (i.e. blood red, red with anger, in the red, red with embarrassment).
4. Divide class into cooperative learning groups to explore one specific color. Have them generate ideas related to: a) things associated with the color, b) kinds of feelings associated with the color, and c) expressions using this color. Have each group list ideas about each of these topics on posterboard, using the appropriate colored marker.
5. In whole-group instruction, examine and demonstrate stereotyped ideas about color. Have each group present and discuss their posters.
6. Ask students to consider how these stereotyped

ideas may have developed. Examine how these ideas may vary from culture to culture.

7. Extend the lesson by examining the association that white equals good and black equals bad and possible transference of this association to people.
8. Help students become more aware of how their attitudes are conditioned by discussing expressions which include the word black. List examples (i.e. blackmail, blackout, black magic, black sheep, etc.).



## ACTIVITY EIGHT

This activity is designed to help students realize that although we may share an experience with someone, our perceptions of the experience may be very different or unique. This activity should be implemented over one week.

### Procedure:

1. Discuss with students that their knowledge of the world around them comes from what they smell, taste, hear, see, and feel. Elicit responses about different types of information they receive through their senses. Ask if they think all would receive the same information when placed in the same environment.
2. For five consecutive days, send students to the lunchroom with paper and pencil. Instruct them to concentrate on a different sense each day and have them record their impressions. Encourage students to list their perceptions privately and not share them with others.
3. Collect the lists each day and compile a master list. Discuss the similarities and differences of the students' perceptions.
4. At the end of the week, discuss the experiment. Include the following questions in the discussion:  
Did everyone sense the environment in the same

way? What contributed to the differences? Is someone "right" and someone "wrong" in their differing perceptions?

5. Lead students in a discussion of the implications of differing perceptions as they relate to communication, interaction, and understanding between human beings.
6. This activity may be extended as a Science/Health unit on the senses.

## ACTIVITY NINE

This activity is designed to help children examine criteria they use in making judgements about people.

### Procedure:

1. Assemble a collection of pictures of a variety of people from magazines. Pictures should represent a wide range of appearances in respect to race, body build, weight, clothing, sex and degrees of attractiveness.
2. Present pictures to students and have them vote for the best school president, secretary, treasurer, and so forth of an imaginary school.
3. Tally the results of the election and solicit students' views about the process and results of the election. On what basis were voting decisions made? Was this a good way to make judgements about people? What should be known about a person before decisions are made about that person's worth? Do people make decisions about others based on physical appearance in real life?

## ACTIVITY TEN

This activity is designed to help children examine many types of differences and explore feelings about one's self and one's relation to others.

### Procedure:

1. Read Nora Simon's book, Why Am I Different? to students. This book depicts a variety of everyday situations in which children see themselves as "different" in family life, preferences, and aptitudes, yet feel that being different is all right.
2. Help students to compare their own experiences to those in the book. Discuss other differences students have experienced.
3. Lead students to the conclusion that the world is a more interesting, richer place because of diversity. Promote respect for oneself and for others.

## ACTIVITY ELEVEN

This activity allows students to examine physical differences which are not related to sex or race but fall across these categories.

### Procedure:

1. Using P.T.C. Taste Papers obtained from a science supply company, examine differences in taste buds. After placing these small slips of paper in the mouth, some students will experience a very bitter taste and others will taste nothing. Approximately 65% of the people doing this will taste bitterness due to differences in taste buds.
2. Examine each other's earlobes. Some people have attached lobes and others unattached earlobes.
3. Experiment to see which students can roll their tongues toward the roofs of their mouths in a cylinder, which can do this only slightly, and which not at all.
4. Have students clasp their hands together. Which thumb is on top? Most people do this consistently the same way.
5. After testing for these characteristics, let students group themselves according to characteristic to find out who is like them and different from them according to each characteristic.

6. Discuss with the class how they would feel if one characteristic was right and another wrong. What determines whether we have these characteristics or not? What if you were told you must clasp your hands a certain way? How would you feel? Is this right?
7. This lesson could be extended by doing a graphing activity in Math of the number of students with each characteristic.

## ACTIVITY TWELVE

This activity is designed to increase students' awareness of the contributions of African Americans to our society. It should be implemented over one to two weeks.

### Procedure:

1. Provide students with a selection of books about the achievements of African Americans and a set of encyclopedias.
2. Divide students into cooperative learning groups. Using the worksheet, "Celebrating African Americans" (see pages 55-57), instruct students to discover each person's accomplishments. This will take several class sessions.
3. Let each group choose one person about whom they would like to know more. Have them prepare a presentation for the class about this person's life and contributions.

## CELEBRATING BLACK AMERICANS

What did these people do? Match each name with his or her accomplishments.

1. Harriet Tubman \_\_\_\_\_.
2. Thurgood Marshall \_\_\_\_\_.
3. Willie Mays \_\_\_\_\_.
4. Duke Ellington \_\_\_\_\_.
5. Phyllis Wheatley \_\_\_\_\_.
6. Bessie Smith \_\_\_\_\_.
7. Martin Luther King, Jr. \_\_\_\_\_.
8. Roscoe Robinson \_\_\_\_\_.
9. Shirley Chisolm \_\_\_\_\_.
10. Ralph Bunche \_\_\_\_\_.
11. Langston Hughes \_\_\_\_\_.
12. Marian Anderson \_\_\_\_\_.
13. Dizzy Gillespie \_\_\_\_\_.
14. James Weldon Johnson \_\_\_\_\_.
15. Mary McLeod Bethune \_\_\_\_\_.
16. Frederick Douglas \_\_\_\_\_.
17. Patricia Harris \_\_\_\_\_.
18. Booker T. Washington \_\_\_\_\_.
19. George Washington Carver \_\_\_\_\_.
20. Andrew Young \_\_\_\_\_.



1. First black woman ambassador. Later a member of the U.S. Cabinet. (1924-1985).
2. Organizer of the Underground Railroad during the Civil War. Helped slaves escape to freedom. (1820-1913).
3. An escaped slave whose speeches, newspaper articles and books made many whites see the wrongness of slavery and helped blacks in their struggle for freedom. (1817-1895).
4. Civil rights leader who believed love and peaceful protest could end social injustice. He was awarded the Nobel Peace Prize in 1964. (1929-1968).
5. U.S. writer, educator, diplomat, who was born in Jacksonville, Florida. He won the Spingarn Medal for literature in 1925. (1871-1938).
6. U.S. pianist, conductor and composer. (1899-1974).
7. Worked for peace after World War II. Won the Nobel Peace Prize in 1950. (1904-1971).
8. Black leader who built Tuskegee Institute to train black youths so they could get better jobs. (1856-1915).
9. Author and poet. (1902-1967).
10. First black to sing at the Metropolitan Opera in 1954. (1902- ).
11. U.S. educator who worked for equal rights for blacks and women. She was an advisor to President Roosevelt. (1875-1955).
12. U.S. blues singer. (1894-1937).
13. U.S. jazz trumpet player, bandleader, and composer. (1917- ).
14. First black woman elected to the House of Representatives. Ran for president in 1972. (1924- ).
15. U.S. baseball player. Home run champion of the National League in 1955, 1962, 1964, and 1965. (1931- ).
16. U.S. poet, born in Africa, and taken as a slave to Boston, Massachusetts. Visited London, England. Wrote

- a poem to George Washington. (1753?-1784).
17. First black to be appointed to the Supreme Court.  
(1908- ).
  18. First black American to become a four-star general in  
the Army.
  19. A great plant scientist who was in charge of Booker T.  
Washington's agricultural department at Tuskegee  
Institute. He made hundreds of useful products from  
peanuts and sweet potatoes alone. (1860-1943).
  20. Elected to Congress three times. Made the United  
States's ambassador to the United Nations by President  
Carter. Elected Mayor of Atlanta, Georgia in 1982.

## CHAPTER FIVE

### RESULTS, CONCLUSIONS, RECOMMENDATIONS, AND IMPLICATIONS

#### Results

In order to analyze potential changes in students' positive attitudes toward cultural differences, comparisons were made between the pre and post test attitudinal surveys. Student responses (Strongly Disagree, Disagree, Agree, and Strongly Agree) for each question on both the pre and post test were recorded in table form. A mean score was also computed by assigning the following values:

Most positive response	=	4
Positive response	=	3
Negative response	=	2
Most negative response	=	1

It should be noted that in the negatively phrased statements, Strongly Disagree (SD) became the most positive response.

Table 5.1 ... Number of Responses on Pre and Post Test

#### Attitudinal Survey to Statement 1

Statement 1: All people are alike in some ways.

	SD	D	A	SA	Mean
Pre 1	2	2	16	7	2.9
Post 1	2	1	17	7	3.0

In response to this statement, the number of positive responses increased by one from the pre test to the post test. The mean was increased by 0.1. Although marginal, a positive shift was noted.

Table 5.2 ... Number of Responses on Pre and Post Test  
Attitudinal Survey to Statement 2

Statement 2: The world would be a better place if all people were just alike.

	SD	D	A	SA	Mean
Pre 2	19	6	0	2	3.6
Post 2	20	5	1	1	3.6

The total number of positive responses (Strongly Disagree/Disagree) to this negatively phrased statement remained the same from the pre to post test. Although the number of Strongly Disagree responses did increase by one, the shift was minimal. The mean score was unchanged.

Table 5.3 ... Number of Responses on Pre and Post Test  
Attitudinal Survey to Statement 3

Statement 3: We are all different in some ways.

	SD	D	A	SA	Mean
Pre 3	3	0	6	18	3.4
Post 3	2	1	5	19	3.5

The data presented in Table 5.3 showed that the number of positive responses (Agree/Strongly Agree) remained the same when pre and post test results were compared. The mean

score was increased by 0.1. No significant change was noted.

Table 5.4 ... Number of Responses on Pre and Post Test  
Attitudinal Survey to Statement 4

Statement 4: I can tell by looking at someone if they could be a friend of mine.

	SD	D	A	SA	Mean
Pre 4	11	6	6	4	2.8
Post 4	14	8	3	2	3.3

According to the data shown on Table 5.4 the total numbers of positive responses (Strongly Disagree/Disagree) to this negatively phrased statement increased by five from the pre to post test. The mean score was increased by 0.5. This shift toward a positive direction was regarded as significant.

Table 5.5 ... Number of Responses on Pre and Post Test  
Attitudinal Survey to Statement 5

Statement 5: It does not matter to me if a person is black or white, boy or girl, rich or poor, as long as they are a good friend.

	SD	D	A	SA	Mean
Pre 5	2	0	1	24	3.7
Post 5	1	1	1	24	3.8

Students' responses to this statement did not indicate any significant change. It was noted, however, that all but

three of the subjects indicated the positive response on the pre test, so little shift in number of responses was possible.

Table 5.6 ... Number of Responses on Pre and Post Test  
Attitudinal Survey to Statement 6

Statement 6: It is important that my friends look, think, and act a lot like me.

	SD	D	A	SA	Mean
Pre 6	16	6	1	4	3.3
Post 6	19	4	2	2	3.5

The total number of positive responses (Strongly Disagree/Disagree) to this negatively phrased statement increased by one. The number of total responses which shifted toward the positive direction was worth noting, however. An increase of 0.2 was calculated for the mean score.

Table 5.7 ... Number of Responses on Pre and Post Test  
Attitudinal Survey to Statement 7

Statement 7: All of the people who have made America a great country have been white.

	SD	D	A	SA	Mean
Pre 7	21	3	2	1	3.6
Post 7	25	1	1	0	3.9

That data cited in Table 5.7 revealed an increase of the mean score of 0.3. Also noted was an increase of two

positive responses to Statement 7 on the post test. The overall direction of responses from the pre to post test was regarded as somewhat significant.

Table 5.8 ... Number of Responses on Pre and Post Test  
Attitudinal Survey to Statement 8

Statement 8: America is a better country because of the contributions of people from lots of different backgrounds.

	SD	D	A	SA	Mean
Pre 8	2	2	13	10	3.1
Post 8	1	3	13	10	3.1

The data presented in Table 5.8 showed that the number of positive responses to this statement remained unchanged. No difference in the mean score was noted from pre to post test. As a result, no significant change was detected.

Table 5.9 ... Number of Responses on Pre and Post Test  
Attitudinal Survey to Statement 9

Statement 9: African Americans, Hispanic Americans, Asian Americans, and others have added a lot of good things to the world.

	SD	D	A	SA	Mean
Pre 9	6	1	6	14	3.0
Post 9	3	2	8	14	3.3

Table 5.9 showed an increase toward the positive response from the pre to post test. There was also an increase in the mean score of 0.3. The shift in responses

to Statement 9 was regarded as somewhat significant.

Table 5.10 ... Number of Responses on Pre and Post Test

Attitudinal Survey to Statement 10

Statement 10: It is good that we are all different in some ways.

	SD	D	A	SA	Mean
Pre 10	2	0	7	18	3.5
Post 10	1	1	4	21	3.7

Although the total number of positive responses to Statement 10 did not vary from the pre to post test, the shift in direction toward the positive response should be noted. The change of the mean by 0.2 indicated marginal significance of responses to this question.

Table 5.11 ...Number of Responses on Pre and Post Test

Attitudinal Survey to Statement 11

Statement 11: Different ideas from different kinds of people can help solve lots of problems.

	SD	D	A	SA	Mean
Pre 11	3	0	9	15	3.5
Post 11	2	1	11	13	3.2

As shown in Table 5.11, the total number of positive and negative responses to Statement 11 did not deviate from the pre to post test. Change in the mean score was not noted as significant. It should be noted, however, that while the number of Strongly Disagree responses decreased,



the Strongly Agree responses also decreased.

Table 5.12 ... Number of Responses on Pre and Post Test

Attitudinal Survey to Statement 12

Statement 12: People who are different from me help make the world a better place to live.

	SD	D	A	SA	Mean
Pre 12	7	5	5	10	2.7
Post 12	3	7	7	10	2.9

The data presented in Table 5.12 indicated a marginal shift toward the positive response from the pre to post test. The change of 0.2 in the mean score was interpreted as somewhat significant.

Table 5.13 ... Number of Responses on Pre and Post Test

Attitudinal Survey to Statement 13

Statement 13: I decide if a person is good or bad based on how different or how alike me they are.

	SD	D	A	SA	Mean
Pre 13	6	11	7	3	2.7
Post 13	14	7	2	2	3.3

The data cited in Table 5.13 revealed an increase in the number of positive responses (Strongly Disagree/Disagree) from the pre to post test. The total number of positive responses to this negatively phrased question increased by six. Within the area of positive response, there were seven more Strongly Disagree responses on the

post test than on the pre test. With an increase of the mean score from 2.7 to 3.3, change in response to Statement 13 was regarded as significant.

Table 5.14 ... Number of Responses on Pre and Post Test  
Attitudinal Survey to Statement 14

Statement 14: It is hard to talk to people who are different from me.

	SD	D	A	SA	Mean
Pre 14	11	5	6	5	2.8
Post 14	11	7	5	4	2.9

Table 5.14 revealed a slight increase in the number of positive responses to this negatively phrased statement. The mean score increased from 2.8 to 2.9, indicating marginal significance for the change from the pre to post test responses to this statement.

Table 5.15 ... Number of Responses on Pre and Post Test  
Attitudinal Survey to Statement 15

Statement 15: A good way to judge people is by what they look like, how they talk, or by the different ideas they may have.

	SD	D	A	SA	Mean
Pre 15	12	5	5	5	2.9
Post 15	14	9	2	2	3.3

As shown in Table 5.15, there was an increased positive response to this negatively phrased question on the post

test. An increase in the mean score from 2.9 to 3.3 also indicated positive change which was numerically significant.

### Conclusions

Based on the results presented in Tables 5.1 - 5.15, it was determined that there was positive movement for each statement on the pre test to the post test attitudinal survey. While movement on some statements was slight and not considered meaningful, other statements rendered results which were somewhat significant. The degree of movement on several statements was regarded as significant.

Statements 13, 14, and 15 showed the greatest amount of change on the post test. These statements were, respectively: "I can tell by looking at someone if they could be a friend of mine.", "I decide if a person is good or bad based on how different from or alike me they are.", and "A good way to judge people is by what they look like, how they talk, or by the different ideas they may have." All three statements dealt with making value judgements about others based on feelings about respect for similarities or differences in others. It was concluded that the implementation of the activities in the curriculum guide was successful in promoting positive attitudes toward differences.

Three items on the attitudinal survey focused on contributions made by different groups to our society. Two

of these, Statements 7 and 9, showed enough increase of positive responses to be considered somewhat significant. This data indicated the pilot activities were somewhat successful in helping students recognize and accept that America has been enriched by the contributions of all its groups, a stated objective of the curriculum guide.

No conclusions were drawn about the lack of change in response to some statements which could be regarded as definitely significant. For this group of students, however, many statements elicited positive response from an overwhelming majority on the pre test. Therefore, no great change in response was possible.

Although the results indicated varying degrees of change from the pre to post test, it was observed that there was no negative movement on any statement in the attitudinal survey. It was therefore determined that the unit of instruction fostered the development of more positive attitudes in a culturally pluralistic classroom.

#### Recommendations

In order to more accurately determine the usefulness of the curriculum guide, the program of instruction should be replicated in different school environments, with different mixtures of cultural representation among the student population, and with a larger sample group. Since a six week period of instruction produced some positive results, attempts at expanding the curriculum throughout the school

year should also be investigated.

### Implications

Because our nation is becoming more culturally, ethnically, and linguistically diverse, educators must continue to search for ways to promote positive attitudes and skills which will enable students to interact effectively in a culturally pluralistic environment. Children's attitudes and beliefs about different groups are being shaped and defined during the elementary school years (Katz, 1983). If a multicultural approach to education such as the one presented by the researcher is able to have a positive impact on students' attitudes, schools should seek to provide these types of opportunities.

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## VITA

Susan T. Bradley

### EDUCATION:

- Attended University of Georgia in Athens, Georgia, 1972-1977. Graduated with Bachelor of Science degree in Elementary Education, Cum Laude, May, 1977.
- Attended University of North Florida, Jacksonville, Florida, 1987-1993. Completed Master's degree in Elementary Education, May, 1993.

### PROFESSIONAL EXPERIENCE:

- Fourth grade teacher at Monroe Elementary School, Monroe, Georgia, 1977-1979.
- Second grade teacher at White Sulphur Elementary School, Gainesville, Georgia, 1980-1981.
- Sixth grade teacher at Emma Love Hardee Elementary, Fernandina Beach, Florida, 1983-1987.
- Third grade teacher at Emma Love Hardee Elementary School and Atlantic Elementary School, Fernandina Beach, Florida, 1987-1993.

### PERSONAL INFORMATION:

- Born:  
Place of Birth:
- Married to Joe B. Bradley since 1980. Mother of three sons: Jason, 11, Beau, 3, and Joshua, 2.